

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Jeff Bingaman and Tom Udall, along with Representative Harry Teague, today introduced legislation that will allow the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Artesia to expand its outdoor training facilities on Bureau of Land Management lands.

The bill (S. 3616) would reserve about 2,700 acres of BLM land for use by FLETC. FLETC currently has multiple agreements with BLM to use 1,500 acres of the land, but those agreements each have their own stipulations and expire at different times. The legislation not only expands FLETC's reservation by an additional 1,200 acres, it also extends and consolidates all the existing land use agreements for a period of 20 years.

“As the facility that provides basic training for Border Patrol agents, U.S. Air Marshals, and other federal law enforcement officers, FLETC has been growing in importance in recent years. Our bill would ensure that the facility can continue to meet its critical training missions, and allow it to expand where necessary,” **Bingaman** said. “In short, this bill provides strong support for FLETC now and into the future.”

“FLETC plays a critical role in training the men and women who secure our borders, patrol our skies, and keep Americans safe and secure in a variety of roles across the country,” **Udall** said. “This legislation will ensure FLETC has the resources it needs to meet increased demand as one of the nation's premier law enforcement training facilities.”

“This important legislation provides FLETC the space and resources needed to support our growing and changing border security needs. FLETC is important to southern New Mexico, not only because of the unique law enforcement training they offer, but also because of the economic impact it has on Eddy County and surrounding communities. As we work to surge funding to secure our border, this bill will ensure that FLETC has the resources it needs to adequately prepare and train our law enforcement agents, now and for years to come,” **Teague** said.

The bill was referred to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which Bingaman chairs.

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